

## Peace

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As the approaching holiday season brings another tumultuous year to a close, peace and harmony will once again be the wish and hope of people here and around the world.

Our conduct toward each other plays an important role in creating the peace we so ardently desire.

`Abdu'l-Baha, the eldest son and successor of the prophet founder of the Baha'i Faith wrote:

*“Unless ye must,  
Bruise not the serpent in the dust,  
How much less wound a man.  
And if ye can,  
No ant should ye alarm,  
Much less a brother harm.”*

`Abdu'l-Baha added: “Let all your striving be for this, to become the source of life and immortality, and peace and comfort and joy, to every human soul, whether one known to you or a stranger, one opposed to you or on your side. Look ye not upon the purity or impurity of his nature: look ye upon the all-embracing mercy of the Lord, the light of Whose grace hath embosomed the whole earth and all who dwell thereon, and in the plenitude of Whose bounty are immersed both the wise and the ignorant. Stranger and friend alike are seated at the table of His favor. Even as the believer, the denier who turneth away from God doth at the same time cup his hands and drink from the sea of His bestowals.

“Be kind to all peoples; care for every person; do all ye can to purify the hearts and minds of men; strive ye to gladden every soul. To every meadow be a shower of grace, to every tree the water of life; be as sweet musk to the sense of humankind, and to the ailing be a fresh, restoring breeze. Be pleasing waters to all those who thirst, a careful guide to all who have lost their way; be father and mother to the orphan, be loving sons and daughters to the old, be an abundant treasure to the poor. Think ye of love and good fellowship as the delights of heaven, think ye of hostility and hatred as the torments of hell.”

According to `Abdu'l-Baha, his father endured the most afflictive of calamities “that He might purify the world, and deck it out with the tender mercies of the Lord God; that He might set it at rest; that conflict and aggression might be put to flight, the lance and the keen blade be exchanged for loving fellowship, malevolence and war turn into safety and gentleness and love, that battlefields of hate and wrath should become gardens of delight, and places where once the blood-drenched armies clashed, be fragrant pleasure grounds; that warfare should be seen as shame, and the resort to arms, even as a loathsome sickness, be shunned by every people; that universal peace raise its pavilions on the loftiest mounts, and war be made to perish forever from the earth.”

`Abdu'l-Baha finally exhorted all to “cleanse their hearts from even the slightest trace of hatred and spite,” and to “set about being truthful and honest, conciliatory and loving to all humankind—so that East and West will, even as two lovers, hold each other close; that hatred and hostility will perish from the earth, and universal peace be firmly rooted in their place.”

May the new year bring humankind one step closer to that great peace promised in all the world's sacred scriptures.

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